

## Hobbies

# It's dangerous to launder that filthy lucre

By Roger Boye

**T**oday's column answers questions from Chicago Tribune readers.

**Q**—Is it possible to clean old paper money? I've got several dirty bills from the early 1900s.

**L. M., Arlington Heights**

**A**—Skilled collectors can improve the appearance of old currency by washing it with a mild soap and warm water. But the process also can damage an antique bill; thus, the novice should practice first on some common

money or let the dirt be.

**Q**—Where can I get insurance for my \$8,000 coin collection, which is stored in our basement? My homeowner's policy has a \$100 cap on the loss of money.

**R. W., Chicago**

**A**—Some insurance companies will write special policies to protect rare coins. Also, members of the American Numismatic Association can buy collection insurance administered by the Albert H. Wohlers & Co. of Park Ridge, Ill. Premiums are as high as \$1.50 a year per \$100 of value for collections not kept in a safe

or vault.

Another option is to rent a safe-deposit box at a local bank. Moisture in a damp basement can damage copper and silver coins.

For information about ANA membership, call, toll free, (800) 367-9723.

**Q**—I'm told that the material in a nickel is worth about four cents and in a quarter, about 18 cents. True or false?

**I. L., Oak Park**

**A**—False. In each case, the metal is worth just a small fraction of the coin's face value.